

REMARKS

In the present Amendment, independent claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 6, which depends from claim 1. Accordingly, claim 6 is cancelled.

Claim 7 is amended to depend from claim 1.

No new matter is added, and entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested. After entry of the Amendment, claims 1-4 and 7-20 will be pending.

In Paragraph No. 8 of the Office Action, claims 1-2, 4 and 8-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,638,645 ("Sawai").

As noted above, independent claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 6, which depends from claim 1. Claim 6 is not subject to the present rejection.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-2, 4 and 8-13 based on Sawai should be withdrawn.

In Paragraph No. 9 of the Office Action, claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Pre-Grant Publication 2004/0058157 ("Ishikawa").

Ishikawa is prior art solely under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as of its U.S. filing date of June 26, 2003. This date is later in time than Applicants' priority date of March 31, 2003.

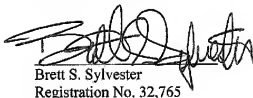
Applicants filed a verified English translation of their foreign priority document, and included a claim chart indicating § 112 support for each of the present claims, in the Amendment filed November 15, 2006. Accordingly, to remove Ishikawa as prior art against the present application, Applicants kindly direct the Examiner's attention to pages 6-8 of the Amendment filed November 15, 2006, and the verified English translation filed therewith.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-20 based on Ishikawa should be withdrawn.

Allowance of claims 1-4 and 7-20 is respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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23373

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Date: May 29, 2007